

Message Text

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TAGS: ECOSOC, SHUM, SGEN, AORG

SUBJ: 60TH ECOSOC--DECADE FOR ACTION TO COMBAT RACISM

1. GHANAIAAN AMB BOATEN SPOKE IN ECOSOC APRIL 28
CONTINUATION OF GENERAL DEBATE ON THIS SUBJECT. FOLLOWING
IS PRINCIPAL PART OF HIS STATEMENT DEALING WITH
FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED GHANA CONFERENCE.

QUOTE

THE OFFER MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA TO PLAY HOST TO THE
WORLD CONFERENCE ON THE DECADE SHOULD BE SEEN AS EVIDENCE
OF GHANA'S MODEST CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF THE
OBJECTIVES OF THE DECADE. IT IS ALSO AN EXPRESSION OF OUR
FAITH IN OUR ORGANISATION - A FAITH PREDICATED ON OUR
CONVICTION THAT GIVEN THE REQUIRED POLITICAL WILL, THERE
IS NO HUMAN PROBLEM FOR WHICH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
WOULD BE INCAPABLE OF FINDING SOLUTIONS.

WE HAVE THEREFORE SET IN TRAIN A NUMBER OF ARRANGEMENTS
CONNECTED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY WHICH WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN
TO HOST THE WORLD CONFERENCE. THESE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD
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INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUMBER OF BUILDINGS TO

SUPPLEMENT THOSE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE IN OUR CAPITAL. THE COST OF THESE BUILDINGS TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE COST OF A NUMBER OF ANCILLARY SERVICES WHICH WE ARE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE, AND WILL PROVIDE FOR THE CONFERENCE, WILL BE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA.

THE COMMITMENT WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN IS A HEAVY ONE CONSIDERING THE PRESSURE WHICH IT WOULD EXERT ON OUR ECONOMY WHICH IS STILL FRAGILE EVEN IF VIEWED FROM THE MOST OPTIMISTIC STANDPOINT. THAT ECONOMY AFTER A SERIES OF VICISSITUDES, IN LATE 1972 HAD BEGUN TO SHOW ENCOURAGING SIGNS OF GROWTH. BUT THEN MISFORTUNE SET IN. NOT BEING INSULATED FROM THE CURRENTS OF WORLD ECONOMIC TRENDS, WE WERE HIT BY THE GLOBAL RECESSION WHICH BEGAN IN LATE 1973 AND HAS PERSISTED TO DATE. GHANA OF COURSE WAS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS IN THE WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION, BUT GHANA WAS AMONG THE COUNTRIES IDENTIFIED BY THE WORLD BANK AND THE UNITED NATIONS AS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THESE ECONOMIC TRENDS.

OUR REQUEST TO THE UNITED NATIONS THAT IT ABSORBS AT LEAST HALF OF THE ADDITIONAL COSTS INVOLVED IN HOLDING THE CONFERENCE IN ACCRA, WAS MADE ONLY AFTER THE MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF OUR ECONOMIC SITUATION. THERE IS NO OTHER MOTIVE TO BE ATTACHED TO OR READ INTO IT.

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO CAUTION AGAINST LETTING GHANA'S REQUEST CONSTITUTE A PRECEDENT; WE ARE EVEN DOUBTFUL THAT OUR REQUEST IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND. NEVERTHELESS PRECEDENTS CAN ONLY BE ESTABLISHED BY OURSELVES AND MAY BE FOLLOWED IN THE FUTURE ONLY IF SITUATIONS WARRANT SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION. PRECEDENTS IN THEMSELVES ARE NOT INHERENTLY DISTASTEFUL.

MOREOVER, IN CONSIDERING GHANA'S REQUEST THERE IS ONE FACTOR WHICH IN MY VIEW SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED. IF THE COUNCIL WERE TO GO STRICTLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF U.N. RESOLUTION 2609 (XXIV), THE NUMBER OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CAPABLE OF HOSTING IMPORTANT UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES WOULD BE VERY LIMITED. IF WE WERE TO ALLOW

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THIS TO HAPPEN WE WOULD CUT BACK THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION TO BECOME BETTER KNOWN OUTSIDE A FEW CAPITALS OF THE WORLD, AND TO EXPAND ITS INFLUENCE AS A WORLD BODY.

AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT SHOWS, THE EXTENT OF THE ADDITIONAL COSTS TO BE INVOLVED ARE AS YET UNCERTAIN. THESE MAY BE DETERMINED ONLY AFTER THIS COUNCIL HAS

DECIDED ON A NUMBER OF MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE CONFERENCE. THESE MATTERS WOULD INCLUDE THE SCOPE OF OUR CONFERENCE AND ITS DURATION. OUR PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF THE ESTIMATES PREPARED BY THE SECRETARIAT, HOWEVER, LEAD US TO BELIEVE THAT WITH CAREFUL SCRUTINY, THE COST ESTIMATE OF \$645,000 CAN BE FURTHER REDUCED. THE COUNCIL MAY FOR THIS AND OTHER REASONS APPOINT A PREPARATORY SUB-COMMITTEE WHOSE TERMS OF REFERENCE WOULD INCLUDE SUCH A TASK. IN RESPECT OF THESE ESTIMATES ONE WOULD WISH TO KNOW WHY IT IS FOR INSTANCE, THAT THE ADDITIONAL COST INVOLVED IN THE TEHERAN CONFERENCE OF 1968, A CONFERENCE WHICH RAN FOR THREE AND NOT TWO WEEKS, INVOLVED A TOTAL EXPENDITURE OF \$598,700 OF WHICH THE ADDITIONAL COST TO THE HOST COUNTRY WAS A FIGURE UNDER \$250,000. MOREOVER, WHILE THE HOST COUNTRY IN THAT CASE DID NOT BEAR THE COST OF TRAVEL OF U.N. OFFICIALS TO THE HOST COUNTRY IN CONNECTION WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE, THE GHANA GOVERNMENT IS BEING CALLED UPON TO BEAR THE COST OF JOURNEYS UNDERTAKEN BY U.N. OFFICIALS PRIOR TO 1978 WORLD CONFERENCE FOR A SIMILAR PURPOSE.

WE WOULD NOW LIKE TO MAKE A FEW SUGGESTIONS WHICH WE BELIEVE WOULD HELP TO CUT DOWN THE COST OF THE CONFERENCE. WE THINK THAT ECOSOC SHOULD DISPENSE WITH SUMMARY RECORDS AND THUS SAVE \$185,000. WE ALSO THINK THE ESTIMATES UNDER CONFERENCE SERVICES ARE RATHER HIGH AND COULD BE REDUCED. WE DISCOVER THAT UNDER DOCUMENTATION, AN EXPENDITURE OF \$14,400 IS ENVISAGED FOR EDITING ALONE. AT THE WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE HELD IN BUCHARES THE EDITING OF 400 PAGES OF DOCUMENTS COST ONLY \$1,000. I DO NOT THINK THAT THE ACCRA CONFERENCE WILL TURN OUT SO MANY TIMES MORE PAGES THAN THE BUCHARES CONFERENCE DID.

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MR. PRESIDENT, I HAVE ALREADY PLEDGED THE DETERMINATION OF MY GOVERNMENT TO DO ALL IT IS CAPABLE OF, IN ENSURING THE SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE. BUT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE SHOULD NOT BE THE CONCERN OF GHANA ALONE. CAREFUL PREPARATION, WHICH SHOULD BEGIN ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, IS IMPERATIVE. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THIS COUNCIL WILL RESPOND TO THIS CHALLENGE IN ITS USUAL FORTHRIGHT AND DYNAMIC MANNER.

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